

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2468

To amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to provide for strategic sectoral skills gap assessments, strategic skills gap action plans, and strategic training capacity enhancement seed grants, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 7, 2002

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to provide for strategic sectoral skills gap assessments, strategic skills gap action plans, and strategic training capacity enhancement seed grants, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Sectoral Market As-
5 sessment for Regional Training Enhancement and Revital-
6 ization Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. SKILLS GAP CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT GRANTS.**

2 Subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act
3 of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2811 et seq.) is amended—

4 (1) by redesignating section 137 as section 138;

5 and

6 (2) by inserting after section 136 the following:

7 **“SEC. 137. SKILLS GAP CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT GRANTS.**

8 “(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

9 “(1) to assist States and local boards in better
10 focusing funds provided under this subtitle on activi-
11 ties and programs that meet the emerging demand
12 for skills in high-quality jobs in area industries;

13 “(2) to enhance the efficiency of the one-stop
14 delivery systems and providers of training services;

15 “(3) to establish and improve partnerships be-
16 tween local boards, industry sectors, economic devel-
17 opment agencies, providers of training services (in-
18 cluding secondary schools, postsecondary educational
19 institutions, and providers of joint labor-manage-
20 ment programs, who are eligible providers under sec-
21 tion 122), and other related public and private enti-
22 ties; and

23 “(4) to strengthen integration of workforce de-
24 velopment strategies and economic development
25 strategies in States, local areas, and labor markets.

26 “(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 “(1) CONSORTIUM.—The term ‘consortium’
 2 means a consortium of local boards, established as
 3 described in subsection (d)(3).

4 “(2) REGION.—The term ‘region’ means 2 or
 5 more local areas that comprise a common labor mar-
 6 ket for an industry sector or group of related occu-
 7 pations.

8 “(3) TRAINING SERVICES.—The term ‘training
 9 services’ means services described in section
 10 134(d)(4).

11 “(c) GRANTS TO STATES.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make
 13 grants to States, to enable the States to assist local
 14 boards and consortia in carrying out the activities
 15 described in subsection (e).

16 “(2) FORMULA.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
 18 make the grants in accordance with the formula
 19 used to make grants to States under section
 20 132(b)(1)(B) (other than clause (iv)), subject to
 21 subparagraph (B).

22 “(B) SMALL STATE MINIMUM ALLOT-
 23 MENT.—The Secretary shall ensure that no
 24 State shall receive an allotment under this
 25 paragraph for a fiscal year that is less than $\frac{1}{2}$

1 of 1 percent of the funds made available to
2 carry out this section for that fiscal year.

3 “(d) GRANTS TO LOCAL BOARDS.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives a
5 grant under subsection (c)—

6 “(A) shall use the funds made available
7 through the grant to make grants to local
8 boards and consortia to carry out the activities
9 described in subsection (e); and

10 “(B) may use the funds made available
11 through the grant, at the election of the State,
12 to prepare strategic sectoral skills gap assess-
13 ments, as described in subsection (e)(2), in the
14 local areas or regions involved.

15 “(2) CONSIDERATION.—In making the grants,
16 the State may take into account the size of the
17 workforce in each local area or region.

18 “(3) CONSORTIA.—States shall encourage local
19 boards to aggregate, to the maximum extent prac-
20 ticable, into consortia representing regions, for pur-
21 poses of carrying out activities described in sub-
22 section (e). Nothing in this paragraph shall be con-
23 strued to require local boards to aggregate into such
24 consortia.

1 “(4) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a
2 grant under this section, a local board or consortium
3 shall submit an application to the State, at such
4 time and in such manner as the State may require,
5 containing—

6 “(A) information identifying the members
7 of the partnership described in subsection (e)(3)
8 that will carry out the activities described in
9 subsection (e); and

10 “(B) an assurance that the board or con-
11 sortium will use, or ensure that the partnership
12 uses, the funds to carry out the activities de-
13 scribed in subsection (e).

14 “(e) USE OF FUNDS.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A local board or consor-
16 tium that receives a grant under this section—

17 “(A) shall ensure that the partnership de-
18 scribed in paragraph (3) uses the funds made
19 available through the grant to—

20 “(i) prepare a strategic sectoral skills
21 gap assessment, as described in paragraph
22 (2), unless the State elects to prepare the
23 assessment;

1 “(ii) develop a strategic skills gap ac-
 2 tion plan, as described in paragraph (4);
 3 and

4 “(iii) provide strategic training capac-
 5 ity enhancement seed grants to providers
 6 of training services specified in subsection
 7 (a)(3), as described in paragraph (5); and

8 “(B) may use funds made available
 9 through the grant to ensure that activities car-
 10 ried out under this subtitle are carried out in
 11 accordance with the strategic skills gap action
 12 plan.

13 “(2) STRATEGIC SECTORAL SKILLS GAP ASSESS-
 14 MENT.—

15 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
 16 subparagraph (E), the local board or consor-
 17 tium (or, at the election of the State, that
 18 State) shall prepare a strategic sectoral skills
 19 gap assessment, which shall—

20 “(i) identify areas of current and ex-
 21 pected demand for labor and skills in a
 22 specific industry sector or group of related
 23 occupations that is producing high-quality
 24 jobs in the local area or region involved;

1 “(ii) identify the current and expected
2 supply of labor and skills in that specific
3 sector or group in the local area or region;
4 and

5 “(iii) identify gaps between the cur-
6 rent and expected demand and supply of
7 labor and skills in that specific sector or
8 group in the local area or region.

9 “(B) SPECIFIC CONTENTS.—The assess-
10 ment shall contain data regarding—

11 “(i)(I) specific high-quality employ-
12 ment opportunities offered by industries in
13 the local area or region; and

14 “(II) specific skills desired for such
15 opportunities;

16 “(ii)(I) occupations and positions in
17 the local area or region that are difficult to
18 fill; and

19 “(II) specific skills desired for such
20 occupations and positions;

21 “(iii)(I) areas of growth and decline
22 among industries and occupations in the
23 local area or region; and

24 “(II) specific skills desired for such
25 growth areas; and

1 “(iv) specific inventories of skills of
2 unemployed or underemployed individuals
3 in the local area or region.

4 “(C) INFORMATION.—The assessment shall
5 contain current (as of the date of preparation
6 of the assessment) information and information
7 that is specific to employers or labor organiza-
8 tions. To the maximum extent possible, the in-
9 formation shall be regularly updated informa-
10 tion.

11 “(D) SURVEY.—The assessment shall con-
12 tain the results of a survey of employers and
13 labor organizations in the local area or region.
14 The survey results shall include information
15 from major employers and labor organizations
16 in the local area or region.

17 “(E) EXCEPTION.—

18 “(i) STATE.—A State shall not be re-
19 quired to use the funds made available
20 through a grant received under this sec-
21 tion, to prepare an assessment described in
22 this paragraph.

23 “(ii) LOCAL BOARD OR CONSOR-
24 TIUM.—A local board or consortium shall
25 not be required to use the funds made

1 available through a grant received under
2 this section, to prepare an assessment de-
3 scribed in this paragraph, if the local
4 board or consortium demonstrates that,
5 within the 2 years prior to receiving the
6 grant, an assessment that meets the re-
7 quirements of this paragraph has been pre-
8 pared for the local area or region involved.

9 “(3) SKILLS PARTNERSHIP.—In carrying out
10 this section, local boards and consortia shall enter
11 into partnerships that include—

12 “(A) representatives of the local boards for
13 the local area or region involved;

14 “(B) representatives of employers for a
15 specific industry sector or group of related oc-
16 cupations, and related sectors or occupations,
17 identified through the assessment described in
18 paragraph (2) as having identified gaps between
19 the current and expected demand and supply of
20 labor and skills in the industry sector or group
21 of related occupations in the local area or re-
22 gion involved;

23 “(C) representatives of economic develop-
24 ment agencies for the local area or region;

1 “(D) representatives of providers of train-
 2 ing services described in subsection (a)(3) in
 3 the local area or region; and

4 “(E) representatives nominated by State
 5 labor federations or local labor federations.

6 “(4) STRATEGIC SKILLS GAP ACTION PLAN.—
 7 The partnership shall develop a strategic skills gap
 8 action plan, based on the assessment, that—

9 “(A)(i) identifies specific barriers to ade-
 10 quate supply of labor and skills in demand in
 11 a specific industry sector or group of related oc-
 12 cupations that is producing high-quality jobs in
 13 the local area or region involved; and

14 “(ii) identifies activities (which may in-
 15 clude the provision of needed supportive serv-
 16 ices) that will remove or alleviate the barriers
 17 described in clause (i) that could be undertaken
 18 by one-stop operators and providers of training
 19 services described in subsection (a)(3); and

20 “(B) specifies how the local board (or con-
 21 sortium) and economic development agencies in
 22 the partnership will integrate the board’s or
 23 consortium’s workforce development strategies
 24 with local or regional economic development
 25 strategies.

1 “(5) STRATEGIC TRAINING CAPACITY ENHANCE-
2 MENT SEED GRANTS.—

3 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The local board or
4 consortium, after consultation with the partner-
5 ship, shall make grants to one-stop operators
6 and providers of training services described in
7 subsection (a)(3) to pay for the Federal share
8 of the cost of—

9 “(i) developing curricula to meet
10 needs identified in the assessment de-
11 scribed in paragraph (2) and to overcome
12 barriers identified in the plan described in
13 paragraph (4); and

14 “(ii) modifying the programs of train-
15 ing services offered by the providers in
16 order to meet those needs and overcome
17 those barriers.

18 “(B) FEDERAL SHARE.—

19 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share
20 of the cost described in subparagraph (A)
21 shall be 75 percent.

22 “(ii) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The
23 non-Federal share of the cost may be pro-
24 vided in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated,
25 including plant, equipment, or services.”.

1 **SEC. 3. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

2 (a) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in
 3 section 1(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 is
 4 amended by striking the item relating to section 137 and
 5 inserting the following:

“Sec. 137. Skills gap capacity enhancement grants.

“Sec. 138. Authorization of appropriations.”.

6 (b) REFERENCES TO AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
 7 PRIATIONS.—

8 (1) YOUTH ACTIVITIES.—Subsections (a) and
 9 (b)(1) of section 127 of the Workforce Investment
 10 Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2852) are amended by strik-
 11 ing “section 137(a)” each place it appears and in-
 12 serting “section 138(a)”.

13 (2) ADULT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING AC-
 14 TIVITIES.—Section 132(a)(1) of the Workforce In-
 15 vestment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2862(a)(1)) is
 16 amended by striking “section 137(b)” and inserting
 17 “section 138(b)”.

18 (3) DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND
 19 TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—Subsections (a)(2) and
 20 (b)(2)(A)(i) of section 132 of the Workforce Invest-
 21 ment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2862) are amended by
 22 striking “section 137(c)” each place it appears and
 23 inserting “section 138(c)”.

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